UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

(Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Editor, 1880-1918)

John Haynes Holmes, *Editor in Chief*

Associate Editors

Francis Neilson Louis L. Mann Curtis W. Reese

President Eliot

By JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

The Story of My Experiments with Truth

Chapter XXII. By M. K. GANDHI

Religion and Patriotism

By DAVID STARR JORDAN

"The First American"

A Book Review by JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

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OF GANDHI'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

will appear in this magazine on

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HIS LAW PRACTISE
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UNITY

"HE HATH MADE OF ONE ALL NATIONS OF MEN"

VOLUME XCVIII MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1926 NUMBER 1

SELF-HELP AND MUTUAL HELP

Self-help is the capacity to stand on one's legs without anybody's help. This does not mean indifference to or rejection of outside help, but it means the capacity to be at peace with oneself, to preserve one's self-respect, when outside help is not forthcoming or is refused. A farmer who, rejecting friends' help, insists on tilling his own soil, making his own implements, gathering his own harvest, spinning and weaving his own cloth and building his own house, all by himself, must be either foolish or self-conceited or barbarous. Self-help includes bread-labor and means that every man shall earn his bread in the sweat of his brow. Hence a man who works in his field for eight hours daily is entitled to help from the weaver, the carpenter, the blacksmith or the mason. It is not only his right, it is his duty to seek the help of these, and they in their turn benefit by the agriculturist's labor in the field. The eye that would dispense with the help of the hands does not practice self-help, but is conceited and self-deceived. And as the different members of the body are self-reliant so far as their own functions are concerned and yet are mutually helpful and mutually dependent, so are we three hundred million members of the Indian body politic, each following the rule of self-help in performing his own function, and yet co-operating with one another in all matters of common interest. Only then can we be said to be servants of the country and only then do we deserve to be called nationalists. *M. K. Gandhi.*

With the beginning of "Part II" of Gandhi's autobiography in these columns on September 20th, new and even greater interest enters into the narrative. Gandhi's days of youth are now over, his period of preparation done. With his return to India and the opening of his law practise in Bombay, he places his feet upon that road which leads to the great non-resistant campaign in South Africa, and ultimately to the stupendous non-violent non-cooperation upheaval in India. It is a marvellous tale, and the telling of it by the Mahatma himself should mark one of the great spiritual events of our time.

The great Earl of Chatham, in appraising the merits of the Civil War in England, and the respective claims of Charles I and Cromwell, is reported to have said:

> There was ambition, there was sedition, there was oppression; but you shall never persuade me that it was not the cause of tyranny on the one side and of freedom on the other.

Here is a formula of thought that gives almost infallible guidance amid the confused and often terrible events of our day. More or less unconsciously we have surrendered ourselves to this guidance for years. Thus, this formula has determined our attitude in all the strife and struggle between capital and labor. Injustice, violence, wrong there have been a-plenty upon both sides of this great combat; but "you shall never persuade me" that "the cause of tyranny" is not on the one side (capital) and "the cause of freedom" on the other (labor). This formula has been our talisman from the beginning in the matter of the Russian Revolution. We know as well as anybody, we believe, what can be said against the Bolsheviki. But paint the record as black as you please, it still remains true that "the cause of tyranny (is) on the one side and of freedom on the other." Whatever their offenses, the Bolsheviki represent liberation and progress. The same formula holds as regards the present church difficulties in Mexico. We know little of what is actually going on there; we have had too much experience with newspapers to believe any considerable part of what is appearing in the press. We are willing to concede, if you will have it so, that the government of Calles is high-handed, despotic, cruel. Say the worst, if you so choose! "But you shall never persuade us that it (is) not the cause of tyranny on the one side (Catholicism) and of freedom on the other" (Mexico). There is no perfect, undiluted good or evil in this world. In any clash of interests, we must seek the preponderance of good.

We have never seen a better exhibition of the Russian situation as it exists in illusion and in realty, than is presented in the August 20th issue of the New York *Times* (page 7). At the top of the column appears a despatch from Paris, headed "White Russians See Soviet Fall Nearing." A long circumstantial story about disaster under the Soviets is summed up in the sensational announcement that "reports received by anti-Soviet circles in Paris confirm recent statements filtering through from Russia concerning the widespread troubles and the growing spirit of revolt among the peasants and soldiers." The impression is conveyed here that the emigres are packing their bags in preparation for the trip to Moscow, to take over the government from the fleeing Bolsheviki! Immediately under this Paris despatch, appears another despatch

from London, telling of the return to England of Robert Williams, Chairman of the British Labor Party Executive, after a three weeks stay in Russia. The impressions of this man are summed up by the reporter in the statement that "the Soviet Government is growing steadily stronger." Finally, in due succession, is printed a despatch from Moscow, special by wireless to the *Times,* telling about the visit of a group of Americans.

> Members of the party (runs the story) have been allowed to go where they wished, see what they wanted, use their own interpreters and ask questions without restriction. . . . The group is leaving tonight with highly favorable impressions.

One member of this party, William H. Danforth, a St. Louis business man, is quoted.

> Lenin and Trotsky (he says) look very different here from what I thought of them in America. Here it is evident that they are patriots trying to do the utmost for their country. I came prejudiced against the Bolsheviki. I leave with the conviction that they are honest and hard-working.

We do not know if the *Times* make-up man was pointing a moral in printing these stories together in this way. But if ever there was a perfect revelation of the "bunk" of propaganda as contrasted with the fact of experience, this is it.

It is a poor set of figures which fails to bolster up a cause in which we are interested. It is this fact that makes us suspicious of figures. We have seen the same statistics used so many times by both Democrats and Republicans, for example, to prove the tariff a failure and a success, that we usually wash our hands of statistics. Nevertheless, we have no doubt that statistics have their place and use. Which brings us to the results of the referendum on the Prohibition issue, recently announced by the National Economic League! This League some time ago sent out an elaborate questionnaire to some 4,600 representative men and women living in all parts of the country. How these men and women were selected, we do not know; what they represented, we do not know. We simply assume that the National Economic League was honest and impartial. Of the 4,600 persons, addressed, 1,904 replied. Of these, 52 per cent were in favor of retaining the 18th Amendment, 44 per cent were in favor of its repeal, while 4 per cent didn't vote on the question. On the question of the Volstead Act, 9 per cent wished to have it retained as it is, 34 per cent were in favor of reinforcing it by more effective provisions, 22 per cent were in favor of modification, 30 per cent were in favor of repeal, and 5 per cent didn't vote. These statistics interest us not as proving anything at all—both "drys" and "wets" can get good comfort from the results—but as indicating at the very best that all the newspaper talk about the tidal sweep against Prohibition, the universal opposition to the Volstead Act, etc., etc., is just so much rubbish. The "wets" are aggressive, have "oodles" of money, vote 100 per cent on every show-down of this kind. The Prohibitionists, having won their formal and final victory, are inactive, vastly disgusted with lax enforcement of the law, amazed at the indecency of nullification and anarchy openly displayed by thirsty respectables, and scorn to pay much attention to referendums. In such a situation, with one person voting out of three, we think the above results mark an impressive reinforcement of the Prohibition cause.

It is not difficult to understand the strategy of the "wets" these days. Their campaign for nullification, as Senator Borah appropriately terms it, centers about the idea of a referendum in the various states. Such referendum has been authorized in New York, by act of the legislature, for this fall. A similar referendum has been provided for in Wisconsin. Colorado, Montana and Nevada have secured referendums by petition of the voters. A petition is now in circulation in Missouri; California is expected to adopt the New York plan. So far as legal action is concerned, these various referendums can be of no effect. They are all absolutely futile because, as Judge Crain, of New York, has recently pointed out in an important decision, "Congress could not constitutionally do that which those voting in the affirmative would by such vote suggest that it should do." The "wets" understand this fact perfectly well. Hence the certainty that their real purpose, as the Boston *Herald* puts it, is

> to obtain an expression of public opinion on the Volstead Act and to use this expression, which they expect to be overwhelmingly favorable to modification of the Act, to bring tremendous pressure in Congress for amendatory legislation that shall substitute some other content for the present one-half per cent of alcohol.

Since they can't change or repeal the 18th Amendment, in other words, the "wets" propose a nullification of it by Congressional action. In the face of such a bare-faced movement for legal anarchy—if we may be pardoned the phrase!—what are the "drys" to do? Obviously, in the first place, ignore the referendums! Refuse to vote on dishonest proposals of this kind, and incidentally make the "wet" majority so nearly unanimous as to be just plain, plumb ridiculous. Secondly, throw all energy into the carrying of the real referendum on the liquor question, which is the election of representatives and senators to Washington. Present prospects indicate that 75 per cent of the next Congress will be "bone-dry." Make this certain, and the "wets" will then have a *run* for their money, but no *rum!*

In the July 20th issue of the *New Republic,* Mr. Lewis Mumford, sensitive and high-minded critic, had this to say of a certain book recently published:

> This is one of those books that do not call for a review; it can be adequately criticized only by writing another book. Mr. J. B.'s critique of W. is as irritating for its praise as for its condemnations; albeit it is a painful attempt to be just and enlightened . . .

In the August 1st issue of the New York *Times,* Mr. J. St. Loe Strachey, one of the most distinguished

literary critics of England, has this to say of a certain book:

> I hope every lover of poetry in England, in the United States, and wherever else the English language is spoken and revered, will read this luciferous and memorable book. It is one of the best pieces of literary criticism of recent years.

Who would ever imagine that these two widely differing comments refer to one and the same book? This they do, however—to Mr. John Bailey's "Walt Whitman." Two competent critics read identically the same pages—and the one is irritated and disgusted, while the other is stirred to enthusiasm. What we have here is the latest illustration of the old, old truth that all judgments are relative. There are no absolute standards by which anything may be said to be either good or bad. This is certainly true of art—it all depends upon the observer! "It takes two to preach a sermon," said Thoreau, "the speaker and the hearer." In the same way it takes two to make a book—the author and the reader. The latter brings quite as much to the work as the former—traditions, experiences, ideas, ideals; and since these are never the same in any two cases, the judgment of the book, or the sermon, is never the same. What is the food of life to one, is only so much hay and stubble to another. And if so with art, why not with morals? Be careful, therefore about judgments. Never say, This is So! But always, This *seems to me* so!

President Eliot

Charles William Eliot, dead at 92, looked, spoke, and acted the part! The part was that of the first American citizen of his time, and one of the great men of the nineteenth century.

He looked it. His tall, alert, stately, well-poised frame—his superb head, with its strong and solemn profile—his majestic presence, dominating by sheer force of innate grandeur, as a mountain dominates a landscape, every company in which he stood—these were unforgettable whether seen in the Harvard President presiding at commencement exercises, in the public speaker standing before a great audience, or in the religious worshipper sitting quietly in his pew.

He spoke it. His words were simple, straightforward, unadorned—but they had the immortal beauty of a Doric temple or a New England meeting-house. They were delivered in a voice of a strangely haunting, silvery, bell-like quality which can never be forgotten by any one who heard it. His style had the repose and the authority of Nature. Speaking in all parts of the country through half a century of time, President Eliot, following hard upon Abraham Lincoln, did more than any other single influence anywhere to change the whole character of American oratory from the ponderous eloquence of a Webster to the gaunt and classic beauty of a Woodrow Wilson. To hear him, in his great days, conferring a Harvard honorary degree, was to behold the high-water mark of public speech in our time. And as he spoke, so also he wrote! In the pages of many an essay or printed address, in his annual reports through many years, especially in noble inscriptions upon public buildings and monuments throughout the land, as on the Washington Railroad Terminal, the Congressional Library, the New York Post Office, is to find the English tongue in its purest native estate. He wrote, as he thought, in the sublime heritage of Milton, Bunyan and the King James Bible.

He acted it! He moved like the tidal flow of great waters, or the rythmic sweep of planets in their orbits—silently, without haste or passion, yet with a cosmic certitude. We have no doubt that he was often tempted to hurry—but he never did. He must at times have craved the relief of wrathful utterance or tempestuous explosion of temper, but he never indulged. He had no part in the hurly-burly, the confusion and disorder, the mad rushing hither and yon of his contemporaries. More than any other man of whom we can think, he embodied the classic utterance of Emerson, "Why so hot, little man?" There was heat in Eliot, be sure of that! But it burst forth in no foolish fireworks, exploded in no spectacular and destructive eruptions. It was harnessed, this heat, like steam in an engine, and did its work smoothly, easily, majestically, powerfully, like a beautiful, well-oiled, perfectly geared machine. When Eliot moved, all the mastered energy of body, mind and spirit were behind his action. It was "timed," as the athlete's blow or leap is "timed," so that every ounce of poised strength was in it. As he moved among men, Eliot made them all seem trivial by the measured momentum and serene dignity of his action. Theodore Roosevelt never seemed so small, so fussy, so essentially noisy and futile, as when brought into conflict or contrast with the Harvard President. Eliot was charged all his life with being cold, stern, austere, even pompous. No sensitive observer but felt something of the Day of Judgment in him! But most men are like Ingersoll watches—and Eliot was like a great hall clock. No wonder, like Longfellow's clock, the solemn beat of his pendulum over-awed with its tone of fate, "Forever, never—never, forever."

President Eliot looked, spoke and acted the part. Yet without effort, with utter modesty, without a trace of pose; More than any other man whom we have ever seen, he manifested the greatness of which he was made. As we think of him, he looms in stature like some tall tower upon the sea.

II

Eliot's life was inextricably interwoven with the history of Harvard in the nineteenth century. This institution, as it stands today, is what Emerson called every real institution—"the lengthened shadow of a great man." As Augustine found Rome brick and left it marble, so Eliot found Harvard College a high school and left it one of the ranking universities of the world. He created the graduate school; he transformed and transfigured the law and medical schools, making them the leading schools in their respective fields in the nation; he made over the divinity school into a non-sectarian institution of scientific theology—the first of the kind in America; he lifted the whole standard of academic training in the college, and indefinitely enriched its curriculum, as he indefinitely widened and extended its equipment. He conceived and introduced the elective system of study; substituted lectures for recitations in the class-room; and displaced oral in favor of written examinations. He abolished compulsory religious worship a full generation before any other college dared, or many another college has yet dared, to make the change. He gathered about him a faculty unrivaled not only in this country but in the world for courage, vision, character, teaching capacity, and creative scholarship. Like Lincoln, he understood and mastered men—and thus mobilized in Cambridge an army of great teachers, of whom William James, George Herbert Palmer, Joseph Royce, Nathaniel Shaler, George Santayana, Hugo Munsterberg, Albert Bushnell Hart, Le Baron R. Briggs, Charles Eliot Norton, Francis G. Peabody, George P. Baker, are only a few of the more famous. In 1894, when Harvard celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of Eliot's inauguration as President, Professor Norton declared that the progress of Harvard was due, "more than to any other single agency, to the character of the man who during this period has been at her head." And Professor Dunbar told his audience that no name, after that of John Harvard himself, "is engraved so deeply on this enduring monument as that of Charles William Eliot."

But Eliot's life-work was not limited to Harvard. His cast stone broke the water at Cambridge, but it started waves that washed far shores. Thus his leadership refashioned the forms as it changed the aims and spirit of education in America. Next only to Horace Mann, Eliot stands as the supreme influence in the educational life of the Republic. Most of what is best in our best colleges and universities today is the direct or indirect result of his teaching and example. Nor was his influence limited to the so-called higher institutions of learning! Down to the smallest school in the smallest town or village his labors carried. No educational institution anywhere but bears to some extent the imprint of his genius. He held for a period of years the presidency of the National Education Association by a right better-founded than that conferred by the suffrages of its members.

But a man of Eliot's capacity and ceaseless activity could not be confined within the limits even of so vast an area as that of education. Slowly but surely, as time went on from the memorable date of his accession to the presidency of Harvard in 1869, in the thirty-fifth year of his age, his influence spread abroad, until he became a sort of mentor and conscience for the American people. He was the only private citizen of his time who was able to speak to and for the entire nation. What a few men win by high public office he attained by sheer force of personality. Thus, in the political field, he was for years a force of the first magnitude. He labored for civil service reform, fought political corruption, upheld the hands of hard-pressed national executives like Cleveland and Wilson. He invaded the vexed field of capital and labor, and applied his staunch individualistic philosophy to problems of trade unionism, trusts and combinations, and industrial arbitration and co-operation. He expounded the gospel of liberal religion with a clarity, precision and prophetic fervor which held attention to his most informal word. He despised no legitimate public means of reaching the popular mind and bringing it enlightenment and culture, as witness his famous "five-foot shelf" of the best literature, and his list of the ten greatest teachers of all time. With the outbreak of the Great War, he emerged from retirement into instant leadership of opinion in this country, and did as much as any other one man to persuade America to take up arms against the Central Empires.

In his latter years he took on the character of an oracle. His word went 'round the world, because it sprang from experience and tested leadership, was winged with character, and bore wisdom, refined and serene, in its lofty flight. He bore honors from universities, learned societies, and national governments without number. At his ninetieth birthday he was showered with tributes from all portions of the globe, of which the most welcome must have been the salutation of the youth of Harvard—the future thus receiving the great man, even while he lived, into the embrace of its immortal remembrance. When he died, he left, as Lincoln left—to quote Markham's great line—

A vacant place against the sky

and it was for a moment as if all men paused to scan the change in the landscape of the world.

III

The man, however, overshadows the career. Eliot was greater than anything he ever said or did. His personality was his supreme contribution—his character his perfect achievement.

He was born of the Puritans, and bore serenely, in a cynical and careless age, the noble virtues of that tribe. To all our self-indulging generation—our free-and-easy, happy-go-lucky race—let it be proclaimed that

Eliot's life was fundamentally a triumph of discipline and self-mastery. His body was tempered, like fine steel, by the strict regime of his ordered days. His impulses and motives were under the stern control of a reason which subjected instincts to facts, and recognized and reverenced the august imperatives of the moral law. His world was one of rational control, never of emotional release. He was "the captain of his soul," because his soul, like that of other men, was a wild crew of untamed aptitudes and passions, and needed mastery and direction if the ship was to "come into port greatly," as now it has. To recall the posture of that frame, the cool processes of that mind, one tone of that calm and silvery voice, is to discover the wantonness and waste of modern ways, and the disaster which they surely threaten.

An individualist by instinct and conviction, Eliot was a thorough-going democrat. He believed in liberty, hated uniformity and conformity, acclaimed the autonomy of the single life. In his own life and thought, he was independent to the point at times of public scandal. No man was more courageous than he in matters of spoken opinion—no man more indifferent to passing gusts of popular disfavor. Full often he was bitterly denounced, but was as unmoved as the granite cliff when pounded by the sea. He would be himself, and would have all other men be equally themselves. Hence a breadth of spirit, an openness of mind, a tolerance and sympathy, which matched his passion for freedom. He ruled Harvard with a power of leadership which dominated an era—but in this same era Harvard was the abode of liberty for teachers and students alike.

In his private life, President Eliot was simple to the point of austerity. He knew the great and powerful of all lands, but loved best perhaps the New England fishermen on his beloved Mt. Desert Island. He "walked with kings, nor lost the common touch." He knew rewards and favors beyond most other men; he suffered sorrows bitter even into tears; yet moved unmarred by either on his perfect way. Serene, pure, high-minded, stern yet tender, strong yet gracious, courtly as a prince, simple as a peasant, master of other men and of himself, flawless type of true leader in a democracy—when shall we look upon his like again?

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

American Notes

[Editorial Correspondence]

I

County jails in America, according to Dr. Hastings H. Hart, provide "an ideal environment for education in crime." No man in the land knows more than Dr. Hart about the subject. He has been for years with the Russell Sage Foundation, and is now making a specialty of jail population. He says that the great majority of the county jail prisoners are not habitual criminals, but their daily association with criminals who are confined there makes them familiar with all forms of vice and crime . . . He reveals the startling fact that 60,000 federal prisoners are confined in the county jails because the federal government has not enough jails of its own. Among these prisoners are men and women who are detained for trial and are afterwards found to be innocent; also those who are imprisoned because not able to pay a fine. What stands most in the way of reform is the attitude of the public that "jails are made for criminals and criminals should not be coddled."

> There is seldom any means of separating witnesses, persons held for trial, or the young, inexperienced criminal from those who are already hardened. . . . This condition is rendered still worse by the fact that prisoners in most jails are absolutely idle. . . . Overcrowding also aggravates the other evils.

A practical remedy for the "horrifying" situation in county jails may be found according to Dr. Hart, in resolutions recently adopted by the American Prison Association which advocate:

> First, That the federal government should at this time give careful consideration to the establishment of a jail system of its own, each one to cover districts where the number of federal prisoners is large, or where the local jail accommodations are inadequate, beginning with the borders of Canada and Mexico . . . Second, That in connection with our federal penal systems there be established a training school for prison officers . . . in which both preliminary and advanced training be provided.

II

Tens and tens of thousands of Americans—especially the younger ones—are attending conferences and camps at this season. These are being promoted chiefly by the churches, the Y. M. C. A., and the Y. W. C. A. though by no means confined to these institutions. Perhaps I should not advertise the fact, but it is at these summer conferences that the most liberal, even radical ideas are being sown. Out-door life with companionship encourages freedom of thought and speech. A progressive pastor, under the spell of the sea, or lake or forest, pours out his soul in a way that would startle his deacons who provide the financial support at home. These however are safe at home, busy at their tasks. Social and political and industrial ideas of revolutionary character get their innings as these tens of tens of thousands are gathered about the camp-fire. If one has a "gospel" which would be too progressive for the pews, which he wishes to preach to the people, I should advise him to go to the summer camps and conferences of the American young people. This has been true in days gone by, as in the case of the classic example of the Nazarene.

To illustrate, I spent a half day in an Epworth League Institute where gathered 500 young people, who, in tents, were spending a week together. I found that truth had pretty free range. People will converse with truth out in the woods, who would not recognize her next day on the street or in the church. The pastors (and the youngest and most progressive pastors are the most popular at such camps) were going around without their clerical labels, either of dress, tone or speech. The pulpit air had been left at home. So,

such conferences become breeding grounds of future reforms of creeds. At one meeting, a speaker was referring to war, and the attitude young people should take toward it. He gave them a picture of the "Ponsonby Plan for Peace" that is being carried forward in England. He said:

> Do you know that it is expected that one million English people, above 16 years of age, will, by next November, have put their signatures to a Letter to the Prime Minister. And they are getting these signatures, in the market-places, in the workshops, in the homes, in the churches. . . . And these English people are saying in their Peace Letter to the Prime Minister: "We, the undersigned, convinced that all disputes between nations are capable of settlement either by diplomatic negotiation or by some form of international arbitration, hereby solemnly declare that we shall refuse to support or render war service to any government which resorts to arms."

And when these Epworth Leaguers heard what the English were doing in the Peace Letter to the Prime Minister, they broke out into cheers.

As evidence of this situation, I call attention to a "Song of Worship Book" for Young People's Conferences. It is edited by Dr. Sidney A. Weston, editor of the Congregational Publishing Society, 14 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. (I would advise anyone interested in social-religious education to send for a copy. Price 35 cents.) He is trying to bring to young people through song and worship the newer type of patriotism. He has, for instance, left out the Star Spangled Banner," and put in songs which people of all nations can sing regardless of national boundaries. The little book, 56 hymns, has been out from the printing press only a few months, but is now under way. The editors of the United Church of Canada have already begun to commend it to their readers. Among the 56 hymns are "Not Alone for Mighty Empire," "O Master-Workman of the Race," "The Brotherhood of Man," "Prince of Truth and Peace," "Into the Woods My Master Went," "Vision of the Holy Grail," "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations," "Fling out the Banner," "Teach Us True Brotherhood," "Brother Man, Awake," "Men, Whose Boast it is that Ye," "God of the Nations," "God Send Us Men Whose Aim 'Twill Be," "A Loftier Race."

"America" is omitted, and in its place is a fine hymn by William G. Ballantine.

> "God save America!
> Here may all races
> Mingle together
> As children of God,
> Founding an empire
> On brotherly kindness,
> Equal in liberty,
> Made of one blood.
>
> "God save America!
> Mid all her splendors,
> Save her from pride
> And from luxury;
> Throne in her heart
> The unseen and eternal;
> Right be her might
> And the truth make her free!"

And these words will be sung by increasing thousands of American young people to the tune of "Russian Hymn." The summer conferences and camps—attended by multitudes—breathing the spirit of freedom and good will and charged with a desire to learn the truth about the life of the whole earth, may well be brought to the attention of those who have become pessimistic over the future of America.

SYDNEY STRONG.

The Story of My Experiments with Truth

[The Autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi]

(Copyrighted, 1926)

CHAPTER XXII

"Called"—But then?

I have deferred saying anything up to now about the purpose for which I went to England *viz.*, being called to the bar. It is time to advert to it briefly.

There were two conditions which had to be fulfilled before a student was formally called to the bar: "Keeping terms"—twelve terms equivalent to about three years; and passing examinations. "Keeping terms" meant eating one's terms, *i. e.* attending at least six out of about twenty-four dinners in a term. Eating did not mean actually partaking of the dinner, it meant reporting oneself at the fixed hours and remaining present throughout the dinner. Usually of course every one ate and drank the good commons and choice wines provided. A dinner cost from two and six to three shillings and six pence, that is from two to three rupees. This was considered moderate, inasmuch as one had to pay that same amount for wines alone if one dined at a hotel. To us in India it is a matter for surprise, *i. e.*, if we are not "civilized," that the cost of drink should exceed the cost of food. The first revelation gave me a great shock and I wondered how people had the heart to throw away so much money on drink. Later I came to understand. I often ate nothing at these dinners, for the things that I might eat were only bread, boiled potato and cabbage. In the beginning I did not eat these, as I did not like them; and later when I began to relish them I also gained the courage to ask for other dishes.

The dinner provided for the benchers used to be better than that for the students. A Paris student, who was also a vegetarian, and I applied, in the interests of vegetarianism, for the vegetarian courses which were served to the benchers. The application was granted and we began to get fruits and other vegetables from the benchers' table.

Two bottles of wine were allowed to each group of four, and as I did not touch them, I was ever in demand to form a quarter, so that three might empty two bottles. And, there was a "grand night" in each term when extra wines like champagne in addition to port and sherry were served. I was therefore specially requested to attend and was in great demand on that "grand night."

I could not see then, nor have I seen since, how these dinners qualified the students better for the bar. There was once a time when only a few students used to attend these dinners and thus there were oppor-

tunities for talks between them and the benches and speeches were also given. These occasions helped to give them knowledge of the world with a sort of polish and refinement and also improved their power of speaking. No such thing was possible in my time, the benchers always sitting at a respectable distance from the students. The institution had gradually lost all its meaning, but conservative England retained it nevertheless.

The curriculum of study was easy, barristers being humorously known as "dinner barristers." Every one knew that the examinations had practically no value. In my time there were two—one in Roman Law and the other in Common Law. There were regular texts prescribed for these examinations which could be taken in compartments, but scarcely any one read those books. I have known many to pass the Roman Law Examination by scrambling through notes on Roman Law in a couple of weeks and the Common Law Examination by reading notes on the subject in two to three months. Question papers were easy and examiners were generous. The percentage of passes in Roman Law examination used to be 95 to 99 per cent and of those in the Final examiantion 75 per cent or even more. There was thus little fear of being plucked, and examinations were held not once but four times in the year. These convenient examinations could not be felt as a difficulty.

But I succeeded in turning them into one. I felt that I should read all the text books. It was a fraud, I thought, not to read these books. I invested much money in them. I decided to read Roman Law in Latin. The Latin which I had acquired in the London Matriculation stood me in good stead. And all this reading was not without its value later on in South Africa where Roman Dutch is the common law. The reading of Justinian therefore helped me a great deal in understanding the South Africa Law.

It took me nine months of fairly hard labor to read through the Common Law of England. For, Broom's "Common Law," a big but interesting volume, took up a good deal of time. Snell's "Equity" was full of interest, but a bit tough to understand. White and Tudor's Leading Cases (from which certain cases were prescribed) was full of interest and instruction. I read also with interest Williams' and Edward's "Real Property" and Goodeve's "Personal Property." Williams' book read like a novel. The one book I remember to have read, on my return to India, with the same unflagging interest, was Mayne's "Hindu Law." But it is out of place to talk here of Indian law-books.

I passed my examinations, was "called" to the Bar on the 10th of June, 1891, and enrolled in the High Court on the 11th. On the 12th I sailed for home.

But notwithstanding the study there was no end to my helplessness and fear. I did not feel myself qualified to practice law.

But a separate chapter is needed to describe this helplessness of mine.

M. K. GANDHI,

(*Translated from Navajivan by Mahadeo Desai*)

Gandhi at Work

In my library at home hangs one of "F. C. G.'s" most famous cartoons. It belongs to the year 1896, and represents Mr. Gladstone, in his own words, as "a person politically dead." The "person politically dead" holds one pen in his mouth while he writes with another. His desk is strewn with papers, on one of which is "advice to candidates," on another "thoughts about the Armenian question," on another "the problem of leadership," and so forth. His eyes burn, every hair in his head is on edge. Readers whose memory goes back to this time will remember that these activities caused a certain embarrassment to Mr. Gladstone's "politically alive" successors, Lord Rosebery and Sir William Harcourt.

The memory of this cartoon came back to me as I drove from Ahmedabad, along the banks of the Sabarmati river, to see another famous man, who also, according to his own account, is "politically dead." This is Mahatma Gandhi, who, after a stormy period, in the course of which the outgoing Viceroy thought it necessary to intern him for his own welfare and that of India, has announced that he has gone into seclusion and renounced politics for the ascetic and contemplative life, at least for the period of a year. Mr. Gandhi may announce what he likes, but he permeates the Indian scene precisely as Mr. Gladstone did the British, whether he was technically on or off the political stage. All talk with Indian Nationalists comes back to Gandhi. If they cannot act with him, they dare not defy him; what he thinks, what he will do next, and whether he may not dish them by some sudden and unexpected move are disturbing thoughts which none of them can suppress. I speak the language of mundane politics, but something else must be added. In the eyes of the politicians, as of all India, Gandhi is a saint. Saints may be very vexatious people, but they are still saints, and Gandhi's hold over his countrymen is that of a man of a spotless and self-immolating character, who stands on a moral altitude which none of his fellow-beings have attained. In India, such a character is unchallengeable, and its influence beyond any political foot-rule. They were cynics in England who challenged Mr. Gladstone's sainthood; there are none in India to challenge Mr. Gandhi's. I have been told that Mr. Gandhi is a spent force, that three years ago he wielded a greater power than any man since Buddha, and now he is nothing. This is not the view of the Indian politicians, who manifestly walk in awe of him, and I do not think it is a view which should be lightly accepted by the government.

If one could only fathom Gandhi's relationship to the Indian people much would be made clear that is now dark and baffling to the European observer. All the circumstances surrounding him are to the European eye singular, not to say eccentric. As we approach his place of retreat I ask my Indian guide about his health, and say I have read with concern that it has been failing of late. He says that happily it is now mending and explains the circumstances of his recent illness. Something had gone wrong in the little community which has gathered about him in his Ashram, and to repair the mischief Gandhi had undertaken one of his fasts. It had

been a little too prolonged, and his health had suffered in consequence, but the spiritual effect had been all that was desired, and he was now recovering. The explanation was given in a purely matter-of-fact way, as if the sequence of cause and effect was self-evident. Gandhi is always fasting when things go wrong, and all India is thrilled when the news goes out that he is fasting. Supposing it were announced in the newspapers that Mr. Baldwin had declined his food and turned his face to the wall and refused to get out of bed when the miners threatened to go out on strike or Lord Birkenhead was making trouble in the Cabinet, we should have the nearest parallel I can think of. It sounds ridiculous but India does really believe in the mystical efficacy of this vicarious penance; and that the atmosphere will somehow be cleansed and the higher powers propitiated when Gandhi offers himself as a sacrifice for others is the belief of multitudes in India today.

As we drive up to the Ashram, Gandhi is being weighed, and his disciples are gathered round making careful notes of the result. My friend explains this to me in the same matter-of-fact way, and we pass on into the little whitewashed chamber where the Mahatma works and meditates, and there after a few minutes he joins us. I had hoped for a private talk—even at the cost of not being able to report it—but his friends follow and sit round in a circle with my wife and myself at one end. He is in the garb of an ascetic, *i. e.,* not garbed at all except for a spreading loincloth. He comes in with a light step, almost running, a lithe and animated figure radiating cheerfulness and benevolence, and seats himself cross-legged on the ground, with a low desk covered with books and pamphlets in front of him. The scene was the strangest mixture of the real and the impossible. He spoke perfect English without a trace of accent and in an absolutely English political way. Shutting one's eyes one could suppose oneself listening to an extremely accomplished English politician; opening them one saw an Indian guru nearly naked surrounded by his chelas, who plainly regarded every word that fell from him as an inspired utterance. Inside the room was cool and shaded, but the blistering sun outside made the guru's costume natural and enviable.

We began about the *Swarajist* tactics of "walking out." I had been told that he disapproved and would probably have something interesting to say. He said simply that he had been against going in, but that those who had gone in would probably judge better than he could about the timeliness or otherwise of going out. A mistake? Possibly, but politics was built up of mistakes, and politicians got their experience by honest mistakes. The Pundit Motilal Nehru, like his predecessor, C. R. Das, was a very devoted and self-sacrificing man. He had given up great wealth, put down his motor-cars, let his beautiful garden run to seed from pure zeal in the cause of India. The actions of such a man had a value which placed them beyond ordinary criticism. If he was wrong—which he did not say—he had earned the right of making his own mistakes. And so the subject passed.

I said it seemed to me a pity that there was so much suspiciousness on the Indian side of British policy and action in India. From our point of view we had made great advances, and they seemed to be met with perpetual hostility and imputation of motives which we knew to be untrue.

Yes, it might seem so to me, but I did not know the other side. There was the same suspiciousness and tendency to impute motives on our side. We, too, had failed to enter into the Indian mind. This lack of charity and understanding was a great pity, but if it was to be mended it must be mended on both sides.

I said that except in the newspapers and in public speeches I thought it was mending. Wherever I had been I had found much greater friendliness and forbearance between Europeans and Indians than when I was last here.

Certainly he thought that was true, and it gave ground for hope. I was not to think that he had any unfriendly feeling towards the British as such. Some of his best friends were Englishmen. There were good Englishmen and bad Englishmen, just as there were good Indians and bad Indians. The distinctions he made were not racial but moral. But as an Indian, he thought of India, of her poverty, her sufferings, and her unhappiness.

The theme was richly developed. As an Indian he should not have complained, if we had brought happiness and prosperity to India by our Western methods. But we had broken up her ancient ways and had not been able to replace them by ways of our own. Her population had multiplied, but was poorer than ever. The cause of India's discontent was her poverty, and her poverty was due to the inroads which modern industry had made upon the life of her villages. Formerly the villages were self-supporting and all the villagers were employed throughout the year. Now most of them were unemployed for four months in the year, and this meant great misery and unhappiness.

What was the remedy? It was simple, if only people would grasp it. They must go back to the old ways and learn to make for themselves what they were now buying. In one word, they must "spin." The four months of agricultural unemployment must be devoted to spinning, and, to set the example, everyone must spin. On the floor by Gandhi's desk was a spinning wheel; in every corner of the Ashram was a spinning-wheel; in every room in the adjacent college was a spinning wheel. Gandhi himself does his portion every day; every member of his little community, every professor, every teacher, every student has his wheel and sits at it for an hour or more every day, producing a certain measured quantity of "cloth." In this way it is supposed that the example is spread, and a spinning atmosphere, if one may so speak, diffused from the Ashram over all India.

I hinted a doubt whether so simple a specific could fit what seemed to me the very diverse conditions of the villages of India. For instance, one might be near a town, where the people might get more lucrative employment than spinning during the four months; or another might be in an area of public works; or a third might be in need of wells or drainage or better houses, or other means of increasing their comfort which would pay them better than spinning, if their labor could be properly directed.

Gandhi brushed these objections aside. In appealing to the masses one must think of something simple which applied to the vast majority of cases, and spinning had this advantage over all other specifics. Warming to his subject, he said that if he could have his way he would from this moment prohibit the im-

portation of a single yard of foreign cloth, whether from Lancashire, Japan or any other country.

From where we sat we looked across the Sabarmati river to the lines of tall chimneys which marked the sites of the great cotton mills of Ahmedabad. These, too, it seemed, would have to be closed down if the spinning specific were universal. After all, it was a mere accident that some cloth came from Lancashire and some from Ahmedabad. Gandhi's objection was to the machine product, which had destroyed the ancient life of the Indian village; and if he had his way about cloth, one saw him going on to the pottery and the hardware and the other miscellaneous products of European and Indian factories, which filled the bazaars and are dispensed to the villages by the *banias*. Thus only could the ancient village be re-established.

For the rest, I tried to draw him into talk on religion, taking as my peg a German book on Christianity and Indian thought which I saw on his table. But he would not follow this thread. He said briefly that the liberal Hindu theology was gaining ground, that his campaign on behalf of the "untouchables" was gradually making progress, but in India one had to be patient. I asked about the feeling between Mohammedan and Hindu; he said that was greatly exaggerated, and hinted that we were fomenting it, which his disciples more emphatically declared to be the fact. I said I thought this to be an instance of the suspiciousness about which we had just been speaking, but I clearly made no impression. Nothing could have been more friendly than his welcome or our parting, but I bore away the impression of a mind working on a plane with which I could not establish contact.

Westminster Gazette. —*J. A. Spender.*

Religion and Patriotism*

I am asked to discuss the relations of religion and patriotism. That a relation exists is plain, for both involve the essential virtues of self devotion and of self restraint, with charity toward all and malice toward none, and of most worth when in action toward the welfare of our fellow men.

Wisdom, I have often said, is knowing what to do next; virtue is doing it, and religion gives us the reason why.

We have been, each of us, suddenly thrust into a gigantic universe, knowing nothing of the past, present or future, except as we can trace it by the dim light of our own observations and experiment and the recorded experiences of others. We find ourselves surrounded by creatures more or less like us and just as bewildered, and again encompassed by natural objects that we can see and feel, as well as by mighty powers we can neither see nor understand. And we know that unseen forces, though not tangible, are just as potent as the others, and just as capable of tremendous disturbance of our daily routine. To stand in awe before the unseen is the beginning of religion; to try to find out how it behaves, is the beginning of science. To be just and kindly towards our fellow men and to be devoted towards our own family is the function of love, and love is an attribute as old as life itself, its traces appearing throughout the whole series, and at last out running conflict. "This world," says Arthur Thomson, "is not the abode of the strong alone: it is also the home of the loving."

The scope of religion deals with relations to one another, and rising, in our minds at least, to all unseen powers around us, which culminate in "the infinite conscious intelligence" that pervades the universe, in which "nothing endures save the flow of energy and the rational order that pervades it."

The word religion is commonly used in several different senses, these bearing a certain relation one to another, but by no means identical in fact or in spirit. From the standpoint of scientific analysis religion is the instinct of fear, awe, reverence, worship, faith, duty, arising from the recognition of the gigantic forces which surround humanity, and of our desire to act in accordance with their supposed purposes, in our pursuit of happiness.

In a historic sense, a religion is definable as the form in which the spirit of reverence has become embodied in human institutions. It is a system of belief, as well as worship, and as such, traditions, ceremonials, symbolism, poetry, creeds and organizations have grown up around it either as aids or as parasites or both. An important branch of science is the study of comparative religions. The distinction between these two uses of the word is indicated in this epigram: "religions die; religion never."

Religion, as I shall use the word, is thus something wholly apart from all customs and traditions which have developed either as helps or as modes of control, or as forms of sympathy. Religion, like love, is imbedded in the nature of humanity. In one form or another it is inevitable, and in all its forms capable of purifying and exalting influences, though subject, even as love is, to human perversions and suppressions. Love and religion, even as hope, "spring eternal in the human breast." It is only their forms and conventionalities which depend on external belief.

Of different systems or aids to religion I have no occasion to speak. In a sense they are all and alike worthy, hence of divine origin because the yearning for reverence and duty is deeply implanted in the human breast. In the first sermon to which I remember listening as a child, the preacher, from Boston, asserted that "the Almighty can accept His creatures without a passport from below." Let us trust that He can do so and that He may find something in each worth saving. What He finds, we may call religion. Thus we may pass by all differences of opinion in these matters and I may use as my text the ancient words of Sophocles, "I am not here to hate with you but to love with you." This should be the final test in all religion.

Patriotism is one of many forms of applied religion. As intolerance, suspicion and hate are cast out from pure religion and undefiled, so patriotism pure and undefiled offers no trace of the evils that lead downward into war. Patriotism is love of one's own country free from hatred of any other. But the word "Patriotism" as we commonly hear it, in every country has several different meanings, some noble, some dubious and others even self contradictory. It ranges from the most exalted self devotion and self sacrifice to the definition of Samuel Johnson as "the last refuge

*An address delivered on July 4th last, at Stockton, California, before an assembly of local churches, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish.

of the scoundrel." Patriotism in its highest aspects is closely akin to religion, and the two have this in common, that those who *boast most of either, possess least of it.* All forms of patriotism abound in our public life, and the man on the street is often puzzled to know the genuine from its varied shams.

Patriotism, love of the fatherland, love of mankind, love of justice begins at home. "It is good," says Dunsany, "to love the cities where we were born, and the little hills that bear these cities up." As we extend our range to other hills, and other cities, we carry our sympathies with us and show these feelings by our helpfulness to mankind everywhere. Thus patriotism becomes state-wide, nation-wide, world-wide, developing into good will towards man and blending insensibly with the highest forms of religion, both of which must be finally measured by the good we do and the spirit in which we do it. But throughout its development, patriotism is beset by human weakness. This shows itself mainly in forms of boasting, rivalry and hate. To do good to our neighbors never means harm to anyone else. Love of one's own nation never demands suspicion, hatred or conflict against any other. No true patriot ever worked to bring on international war. A test of patriotism is found in this: Who is helped and who is harmed by our activities? Not every man nor every government can pass this test. So rare is any group of rulers continuously patriotic that Thoreau once exclaimed: "I cannot help thinking of you as ye deserve—O ye governments." Jefferson still earlier, with the same thought, declared: "I tremble when I think that God is just." For justice is one of the last considerations of men in power. Power is valued as a mean of over-riding justice, and as all power is primarily what the people grant or allow, all injustice of force or terrorism falls back on us who permit it. In the long run men and nations get what they deserve. In a little book of world history, lately written for children of France, the author, the distinguished Dr. Charles Richet of the University of Paris describes the amazing genius of Napoleon and its most disastrous effect on the welfare of France. "Napoleon set back European freedom for sixty years." Yet, he continues "France amply deserved her Napoleon, for from the day of his appearance she grovelled at his feet." In most governments, our own included, matters of justice receive scant notice until some crisis arises to change them from questions of politics, wrangled over for partisan advantage, or settled for the time by compromise, to matters of right and wrong, which know no compromise.

Thus at times some great question arises above "the patched up broils of Congress" to the jurisdiction of the Higher Law. Of this change, the fate of slavery is the most striking example, because a moral question was constantly involved. "No nation could endure half slave and half free." For this reason the soul of John Brown, who gave his life to the cause of justice, "went marching on." "Those who blamed the bloody hand forgave the loving heart." "He was not 'Old Brown' any longer, but an angel of light." Now and then in history "some great cause, God's new Evangel" rises to test the patriotism of men and nations. On the one hand rises justice, on the other selfishness, policy and compromise, until the revolt of mankind sweeps it away. At the last all injustice and oppression comes before the "Great Court of Last Resort" which sits "forever in the darkness, the heart and conscience of universal humanity."

"My country, right or wrong" is a familiar slogan of cheap patriotism. A better watchword was that of Carl Schurz, "My country, may she ever be in the right, but when she is not, then every effort to make her so." That his nation, with most others, chose the worst slogan, led naturally to her own desolation at the same time engulfing her neighbors as well.

Twenty-five years ago, in one of our California High Schools, some one asked "What is patriotism?" "Killing Spaniards" was the confident reply. Sham patriotism of this sort is rife among grown people the whole word over today, and still infects all school systems, and through them the whole body politic.

War has no normal relation to patriotism. The highest patriotism has always consisted in avoiding war as a means of securing any kind of justice. No honest interest clamors for it. As Disraeli, with hundreds of others has said: "War never settles anything." It merely raises a new swarm of disputes with their aftermath of suspicion, hate, bankruptcy and degeneration, pointing toward ultimate collapse. No nation ever dropped into obscurity save from the slaughter of its best elements, the chief finality of war.

Heroism and patriotism are not products of war. They are evidences of the divine spark in humanity rising against the most hideous conditions—in the words of a British soldier "amidst the barbaric loneliness of hell."

The conception of patriotism as merely "running with the herd" and "hating all who will not hate" is too cheap and easy to be accounted a virtue. Patriotism is shown in the effort, more or less solitary, to check mob stampede and to turn it backward. Such attempts are rarely successful at the time, but later, when sanity returns it finds its appreciation as the growing list of saints and martyrs of patriotism and of religion clearly shows. Lowell's dictum holds forever true: "count me o'er earth's chosen heroes; they were men that stood alone." The highest patriotism bids man to stand for truth and justice—even if forsaken by all about. For the crowd in all lands is lacking in insight and feeble in faith, "the timid friends of God" as Leonardo da Vinci once styled the persecutors of science.

An important point of view in regard to patriotism is suggested by Burke. A nation is at once a contract and a trust. Our republic does not belong to you nor to me, nor to any, nor to all Americans of our generation. It was handed down as a trust by those who went before. It is our duty to keep intact all its principles which we hold in reverence. It is our duty to try to remove all evils which have crept into its substance—all wrong, injustice, suppression and oppression, to see that "the winds of freedom are blowing" within its atmosphere, and to do our part to see that greed and violence do not mar its future as they have more than once darkened its past. "Never again" should be our resolution, as past national crimes and blunders rise before us. It is for each of us to use his influence toward keeping this implied contract, and to leave behind us traditions which will help our children to be equally loyal to the work of our fathers.

A distinguished scholar, Dr. Albert Guérard, left Paris some years ago to become an American with the rest of us. To America which looks forward, and in which for this reason hatred dies away, he pays this noble tribute:

The reason for America's sanity as a nation, the unique power which enables her to welcome men from all

parts of the world and to turn them into loyal citizens, is that America looks forward instead of backward. It is a country whose ideals are principles instead of traditions. Europe is suffering from an overdose of history; Europe lacks the healthy radicalism, the youthfulness, even the boyishness of the American mind. When you travel in dear old Europe you are delighted with the quaint villages, the churches and castles hoary with centuries, the bright costumes of the peasant women, the narrow crooked lanes of the medieval cities, the pomp of court functions and military pageants. History is beautiful for the poet and even for the traveler. I cannot help feeling the poignant charm, the secret and subtle appeal of the undying past. But do not mix up archeology and poetry with present day politics. All of us, when we come to America, are welcome to preserve our sentimental and artistic traditions; but we are expected to leave behind all the hereditary jealousies which are the warp and woof of European history. The past is past! Let us cherish the fine old stories of our father's heroic deeds; but let us settle all present and future differences as men of the twentieth century. If we could but conjure away Europe's incubus of historical traditions, peace would be at hand.

Let us hope that these fine words may ever be deserved by America. The noblest boast of a nation (and ours needs no boasting) should be this: that it is the *land where hatred dies*. And when we salute our flag, let us think not of the victories won in battle, but of the greater triumph, not yet complete, of outlawing hate. Ours is the flag under which hatred dies away. So from day to day let us cherish our growth of self devotion, world helpfulness and world peace. To no nation or man shall it profit to gain the world while losing its own soul. And to religion and patriotism rightly understood, and loyally cooperating, we must trust the future of our republic.

Stockton, California. DAVID STARR JORDAN.

The Study Table

"The First American"

The tale of Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War is destined to be the classic saga or epic of modern America, as the tale of Troy and its heroes was the classic epic of ancient Greece. This tale, however, has never hitherto been treated in the epic form. We have had the stupendous fundamentalist "history" of Nicolay and Hay, the personal narratives of Herndon and Whitney, the fresh investigations of Ida Tarbell, innumerable brief biographies, of which Lord Charnwood's familiar volume is perhaps the best, and last year the exhaustive and in many ways final work of Dr. William E. Barton. But these books all dwelt in the realm of historical study, which is concerned with documents, records, *facts*. What we have needed is somebody who could take these facts, and transmute them into the stuff of poetry, and thus produce the epic of Abraham Lincoln. Now comes Carl Sandburg, who does this very thing in his big two-volume work on the immortal Illinois statesman.*

There is something ineffably beautiful about this book—nothing like it has ever been done before with Lincoln, or any other great historical figure. We have biographical romances a-plenty—stories that begin with certain given facts of personal life, and then wander off into the thin upper air of fancy. But Sandburg does not do this! He has mastered his theme as thoroughly as the veriest dry-as-dust professor in the university library. He has read every book, studied for himself the original source material, gone through the contemporary newspapers and documents of Lincoln's time, tramped the Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois country which was Lincoln's homeland till he went to Washington in 1861. His Preface is a really extraordinary confession of patient and long-continued research. He discovered little that was new—a letter of Lincoln's to his wife is the most conspicuous "find"—but the day has pretty definitely passed by for this sort of thing in the case of Lincoln. After Tarbell and Barton, the gleaning must be scant—at least until letters deposited in the Congressional Library by Robert T. Lincoln are revealed years hence!

With such mastery of the Lincoln material, Sandburg then took his next step. He began to merge this material with the history of the nation through the frontier period of the first half of the nineteenth century—or rather he undertook deliberately to master the American story of prairie and forest and toiling pioneers, that he might interpret this tremendous saga of the nation in and through "Abe" Lincoln as the typical figure of the whole. His story, therefore, began to expand into historical backgrounds and geographical perspectives. He would write more than the tale of Lincoln—he would write as well the story of American democracy, as it moved out of the effete East into the new world of the unexplored West. He would follow the pioneers as they crossed the Alleghanies, moved down the river-courses to the Mississippi, hewed down the forests and broke the land, fought Indians and wild animals, built cabins and laid out townships, raised corn and potatoes, drank and gambled and cheated, loved and hated, toiled and sweat and died, and at last produced from their own rude bosom their hero—"new birth of our new soil," said Lowell, "the first American"—Sandburg, be it said, was peculiarly fitted for this larger task, for he grew up as a boy in Knox County, knew the country, and had "heard the talk of men and women who had eaten with Lincoln, given him a bed overnight, heard his jokes and lingo, remembered his silences and his mobile face."

But this was not all! Sandburg did not hurry his task. He waited—he kept his material in his heart as well as his head, and brooded over it as a mother broods over the child in her womb. He tells us that his work has been with him "for thirty years and more." The result is not a biography, or a history, merely, but a poem—a great American epic. You discover this fact in the very form in which the book is written—no foot-notes or bibliographical references, almost no documents or letters, dates so few that it is difficult at times to tell through what year the story is passing at the moment. You feel it in the atmosphere of the book—

*"Abraham Lincoln in The Prairie Years," by Carl Sandburg. Published by Harcourt, Brace & Company. 2 volumes.

the smell of forest-breezes and smoky cabins, the colors of flowers and leaves and autumn sunsets, the tang of virgin earth, the company of tired, determined, patient men and women. Above all, you lay hold upon it in the figure of Lincoln—the little boy, the stalwart youth, the mighty wrestler and rail-splitter, the country store-keeper, the lawyer and legislator—raw, crude, homely, full of coarse jests and ribald laughter, but with secret deeps which produced the idyl of Ann Rutledge, the drama of the Douglas debates, and the stupendous epic of the Civil War.

Sandburg's volumes cover what he calls "the prairie years"; they end with Lincoln's departure from Springfield to take the oath of office as President of the United States. The first volume is the nobler of the two—here the epic is most faithful to itself. The second volume has long stretches of prose—not, I think, because the poet has lost his inspiration, but rather because it covers a period when Lincoln was less the native hero than at any other time in his career. Had it not been for the essential man within him, how easily he might have slipped into obscurity, and how close was the margin of escape even as it was! But with the Douglas debates, the book rises to great heights, and remains there to the end.

Carl Sandburg has written four books of poetry. They have been called such at least, but I have never been able to find much poetry in them. But here, in this biography of Lincoln, is a poem, indeed! It belongs with Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, as a part of the true literature of America.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

Correspondence

"Outlawry of War" in Bulgaria

[From a Private Letter]

". . . I see that this plan, though not running counter to the movements for the League, the Hague Court, or Disarmament, goes deeper, and attacks the war evil at its roots. One of the most hopeful points of the plan, as I see it, is its insistence on popular abrogation of war by the referendum system. Emphasis should be laid on the point that what is asked for is not so much governmental action independent of the will of the people, as a decision of the people themselves to cast away the system of war. That gives a wide field for popular agitation and open propaganda. . . .

"Your plan is little known here in Bulgaria—I should say almost unknown—and yet Bulgaria is one of those countries that would become a fertile field for the propagation of the idea of outlawry of war. Having suffered during the war not less than the other belligerents, Bulgaria is feeling the pressure of the war burden more acutely than its neighbors. Being the first of the vanquished states to pay regularly its share of the reparations, having a comparatively small army, and being surrounded by victorious and much stronger armed states, Bulgaria has ever since the armistice followed a consistently peaceful policy, putting its trust not in arms, but in the Treaties of Peace and in international justice. It may be that it was the first country which, when attacked (the Graeco-Bulgarian frontier incident of last year), ordered its army to retreat in front of the enemy, and purposely abstained from fighting. This was not weakness, but great moral strength in the belief that international justice would be obtained not by force but by process of law. That being the policy of the Bulgarian Government, it is also the widespread conviction of the people.

"I am sure that the state of mind in Bulgaria today presents a happy opportunity to start to disseminate your ideas. . . ." W. G.

Sofia, Bulgaria.

Childishness—and Childlikeness!

Editor of UNITY:

Someone criticized you in a letter recently saying that your policy toward colored people was childish. Yes, of course it is childish but childishness is just what the world needs today. Childishness is something which everybody can understand, and being just brothers and sisters in the world, a great family of children with God as our Father and the earth as our Mother is what our childish religion teaches us, and somehow the more we see of human beings of any and all kinds the more we become convinced that we are in truth a great lot of children and that it will probably be a long, long time before we become anything else.

There is something peculiarly sane and safe about childhood, something definitely sweet and innocent and loving about it, but nevertheless there is an infinite amount of power behind the idea. The great power in it consists mostly in its simplicity. And simplicity is powerful for at least two reasons: (1) because it is understandable, (2) because it is not complicated and wasteful. The power of simplicity came home to us during the war. As a conscientious objector during the war hardly a day passed in which we were not more or less severely questioned by a couple of dozen people. A person with an exceptionally keen mind might be able each time to explain patiently an elaborate system of ethics; we started out this way but the strain was too much after it was kept up continuously for weeks. So after a while we began to explain our views reduced to their simplest terms: in terms of Father and Son and righteousness and faith and obedience. And immediately we learned that the average mind like our own was childish after all regardless of whether it was a convict or a captain—although the convicts' minds were usually a trifle more keen than the captains'. To us this was a new revelation; we ran from then on as one running free, stripped of his clothes and a pack on his back. And we not only covered more miles but reached more of our fellows.

There are two peculiar traits about the grown mind which are pretty much absent in the child mind: pride and prejudice. Most of our race antagonism is due to this failing, and if we stopped to analyze our feelings we would be bound to acknowledge that all people are pretty much alike—outside of customs, clothes, creed and color—the world over. That there are good and bad in every race and religion and if for some reason or other it is difficult to swallow this pill all we need to do—that is if we have any mind or imagination at all—is to go out in the fields at night and consider the stars.

KARL SPIESS ROBINSON.

Los Angeles, Calif.

A Gracious Word

Editor of UNITY:

After a year's absence, I find the issues of UNITY awaiting my attention of great interest. Gandhi's autobiography and Doan's "Un quart d'heure pour Dieu" are particularly appealing. Altogether, UNITY meets the need of the spirit as no other publication can or does. May its editors and contributors be blessed! L. B. N.

Correction

In Gandhi's article on "Social Prohibition," published in the August 16th issue of UNITY, a mistake was made in printing the figures of "revenues derived by the Government in the Excise Department." As printed in *Young India*, the figures are "Rs. 20,00,-00,000—80,00,00,000—60,00,00,000." We should like to have some Indian reader give us equivalents in dollars.

The Field

"The World is my country, to do good is my Religion."

NEW METHODS OF PROCEDURE ADVOCATED BY JANE ADDAMS

I should like to begin my speech this evening with a quotation from a paper published in Dublin more than ten years ago. I want to quote the words of a great Irish pacifist known to pacifists all the world over. His name is Sheehy Skeffington. Mr. Skeffington wrote on the 22nd of May, when the great war was in full swing:

> "I advocate no mere slavish acceptance of injustice. I am, and always will be, a fighter, but I want to see the age-long fight against injustice clothe itself in new forms suited to a new age. I want to see the world no longer hypnotized, no longer blind to the horrors of organized murder."

The Women's International League believes with Mr. Skeffington that people are not obliged to choose between violence and passive acceptance of unjust conditions for themselves or for others, but that moral courage and active good will, will achieve more than violence. We believe that new methods, free from physical violence, must be worked out.

I should like to draw your attention to the different groups of people in the various parts of the world who are working out this new method.

I went around the world a few years ago and one of the places that stands out in my memory is India. A great effort is being made there to obtain self-determination. But the two groups who are working for it have absolutely put aside the use of arms and violence. One group calls itself the Constitutionalists. They are doing what they can to secure legislative privileges in the way of office holding and to gradually fit themselves for the technique of government.

I was given a party by the Social Workers' Club. I expected to see the usual people associated with Social Work. But instead I found a room full of fifteen hundred young men. They were preparing themselves for the type of government they believed India ought to have. They wanted to know about Child Welfare Stations, about Unemployment Doles and all the governmental experiments to aid mankind which we are trying in America and elsewhere.

Then there is another great movement in India, the one led by Gandhi. His advice to India is to raise its own simple clothing as well as its own simple food. He stands for an independent life outside the western civilization. His teaching may be right or it may be wrong, but it is not a mere sentimental thing with him. . . .

But this is only one aspect of Gandhi's preaching. His great doctrine is that of passive resistance. To resist with soul force instead of brute force. He maintains that only by passive resistance has India any chance of competing with the Western civilization. . . .

I also recall vividly my visit to China. We had a meeting of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the young Chinese who presided in Pekin was a native preacher. He had been converted to Christianity. This young man said: "After all, Christianity is an Eastern religion; produced in the East, taken over to the West, and now it has been brought back to the East." And he said: "The East asks this question of you. We have accepted the West's doctrines, but we have no technique as to what to do in time of strife. We have thirty-two provinces and in each there is a military governor hoping eventually to make himself the ruler of China. These governors are fighting each other and they are living on the people. What technique have you worked out for circumstances such as these?"

What could I say, I who represented for the moment the civilization of the West? I could only say we had no technique, as we ourselves resorted to arms. But now I can say to you in the West that there are small groups in China trying to work out a technique of non-violence, so that the doctrine of good will, the melting influence of human love, may be brought to bear on vexed situations. . . .

This theory of running the world without violence is being tried out; it is no dream, it is an actual living concern for many thousands of people in many parts of the world. I believe the East is going to get there first. The most intellectual attempts are being made in India and China. . . .

I wish to say in closing we have never had a more cordial welcome than here in Ireland. You have given us a most delightful hearing and we will go away from Dublin feeling we have left behind us very warm friends who will follow on in the work for some of the great ideas of world peace which were first enunciated by your own people.—*Extract from speech by Jane Addams, Mansion House, Dublin.*

THE SPINGARN MEDAL

In 1914, when he donated this Spingarn Medal to be awarded every year for the recognition and acclaim of that black American citizen who shall be judged to have made in any year or years the highest achievement in any field of human endeavor, J. E. Spingarn did a great thing. I was running over in my mind the other day the roll of honor that has been written in the history of the Spingarn Medal. I see two scientists: First of all, Edward E. Just, who ranks high among American scholars, those who have walked in the footsteps of Darwin and Huxley in biological research; then George W. Carver, whose researches in agricultural chemistry have added immeasurably to man's knowledge and mastery of the rich fruitage of the earth. And there is a soldier, Major Charles Young, steadfast and patient, and efficient in the service of his country and that sister country, the Republic of Liberia. There is the author and the statesman, William E. Burghardt Du Bois, who by his mastery of the English tongue has contributed materially to the literature of modern times and by his founding of the Pan African Congress has lifted up the souls of black folk throughout the world. Then there are two poets and critics, William Stanley Braithwaite and James Weldon Johnson, men whose achievements in the most royal and beautiful of all literary arts have contributed to the glory of their own people and to that greater glory of America which is the possession of us all. Here is an actor, Charles S. Gilpin, who by sheer force of personality, faith and the genius of his art broke through a way for himself and his people into the sacred temple of the drama. And here are two musicians, Harry Burleigh and Roland Hayes, whose voices, among the greatest of our time, have carried to the ears of an enraptured world the intrinsic beauty of Negro song. Here are two great servants of the public weal, Archibald H. Grimké, a gentleman, without fear and without reproach; and Mary B. Talbert, a noble woman, matured by wisdom, strengthened by service, heroic in labor and gracious in hospitality and love.

These names added to the names of your immortal dead—Frederick Douglass, Paul Laurence Dunbar and others—these constitute your living Hall of Fame, growing from one year to another as one more golden name is added to the list.

And now tonight we are to add the twelfth name in the great succession. Again, as in the beginning, this is the name of a scholar laboring year after year in the quiet seclusion of the laboratory, seeking no popularity, not caring for the applause of men, indifferent to reward, save the plaudit of his own heart and the joy of fresh discovery and knowledge; but now hunted out by those whose duty it is to spy upon such workers and brought here into the presence of this great

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Reported in *The Crisis.*

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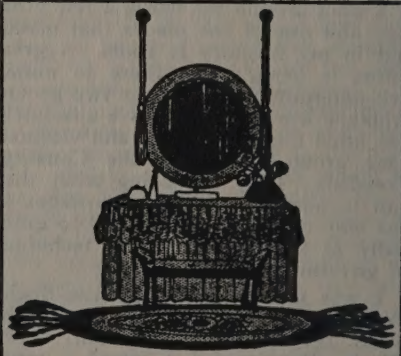

IN SEPTEMBER

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